WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

C.B.I. Probe in Hijacking of IA Plane

447. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether CBI has constituted a special investigation team to conduct a comprehensive probe into the recent hijacking of the Indian Airlines Airbus on a Kathmandu-New Delhi flight;

(b) if so, the details of the preliminary investigations conducted by various agencies so far in this regard; and

(c) the further steps Government propose to take/have taken to check such hijacking in future?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) and (b) The CBI is investigating the case registered against the crime of hijacking. It is yet to be concluded.

(c) The following steps have been taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents in future:

(i) Deployment of Sky Marshals on all flights on random basis;

(ii) Deployment of Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in place of the State Police for security duties at the domestic operational airports in a phased manner. CISF has already taken over the security duties at Jaipur, Guwahati, Port Blair and Vadodara airports;

(iii) Frisking of passengers and hand baggage at the time of entry into sterile area has been tightened. Ladder point secondary frisking has been introduced;

(iv) Strict control on access to the airports is being ensured by comprehensive review of Photo Indentity Cards to restrict the number of pass-holders and banning of entry of the visitors upto 28th February, 2000;

(v) Raising of the perimeter wall to the prescribed height at all the operational airports.

(vi) Replacement of old X-Ray machines and installation of new colour X-Ray machines wherever necessary so as to ensure that atleast two X-ray machines are available at every point; and

(vii) Modernisation and upgradation of security related technological set up of the airports is being done in a phased manner.

Involvement of Air Travel Agents in Hijacking

448. SHRI SHIBU SOREN: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of air travel agents have been found involved in the recent case of hijacking and abduction of Indian Airlines aircraft;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the names of those travel agencies;

(c) whether any further inquiry regarding their business with Indian Airlines and Air India is being carried out;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV): (a) to (e) Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) is conducting an investigation into the criminal case registered against the hijacking. The investigation is yet to be completed.

Expansion of Air Services in Punjab

449. SHRI LAJPAT RAI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to connect more cities of Punjab with airways;

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government in this regard;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;